ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 6/18/65	DATE RECEIVED 6/15/65

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED001024	N.A.	N.A.	

4. AUTHOR(S): Saltzman, Henry

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Great Cities School Improvement Program

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORG. Public Affairs Program; ST. Ford Foundation; STATE New York, NY

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: Conference on Curriculum and Teaching in Depressed Areas - Teachers College - Columbia U.

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	11

TEL ... EXT. ... INST/LOC CODE ...

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☐ NO ☐

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TYPE OF REPORT: PROPOSAL ☐ IN-PROGRESS ☐ FINAL ☐ FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: speech

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

community	environment	Cleveland	Philadelphia	St. Louis
programs	Great Cities Prog.	Detroit	Washington, DC	Buffalo
language arts		Milwaukee	San Francisco	socio-ec. factors
		Pittsburgh	Chicago	cultural disadvantage-

compensatory education, low-economic areas ment

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

To compensate for the effects of environmental deprivation, a number of large cities have developed programs for school children. Certain assumptions and principles must be accepted before the programs can materialize.

In Buffalo, teachers are revising curriculum for the culturally deprived in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Improving reading skills is the focal point.

In Chicago prevention of drop-outs can be achieved by remedial instruction, intensive academic and vocational guidance, practical job training, and cultural enrichment for over-age elementary school students.

In Cleveland, a "port of entry" project helps migrant children and parents adjust to urban life.

In Detroit, personnel is added to the staff of one senior high, four elementary, and two junior high schools. These new specialists are school-community agents, visiting teachers, and coaching teachers.

In Milwaukee, special teachers are assigned to help in-migrant children learn the basic skills, provide them with cultural enrichment, and help in their social adjustment.

In Pittsburgh, team-teaching is used in eight elementary and one junior high.

In Philadelphia, neighborhood residents are used as school-community coordinators and to improve the teaching of reading. In San Francisco, the project seeks to improve the reading and language skills in two elementary, one junior high, and three senior high schools. In St. Louis, experimentation with work-related school programs reduce the drop-outs.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OR PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

Reiser J3 I1

Teachers College, Columbia University
New York 27, New York

Work Conference on Curriculum and Teaching
in Depressed Urban Areas
July 1-12

GREAT CITIES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

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Within the past few years, the phrase "compensatory education" has come into common usage among urban educators, especially those who must take the responsibility for the design of large scale school improvement programs in slum areas. Simply stated, compensatory education is any program which grows out of the identification of specific handicaps to learning and is designed to overcome the effects of such handicaps.

The concept is not a new one. It is only the contemporary expression of a traditional concern in American education for individual child development. In the past, compensatory programs have been developed to deal with physically and emotionally and mentally handicapped children. Most of the States offer some form of financial support to those local communities which design special programs for the retarded, the lame, blind, palsied or deaf child and for those too seriously disturbed emotionally to participate in regular school classes.

Each of these physical and emotional handicaps can be found in every community and in every strata of the society. Mental retardation, for example, is a "democratic" affliction --- the rich as well as the poor suffer. So also with the others. These disabling conditions are distributed vertically throughout our population. They are not the unique possession of any single class of people. It has not been surprising, therefore, that the most sophisticated leadership groups in our country --- socially, intellectually and economically --- have been active in the successful campaigns to secure public financial support for school programs which compensate for the child's handicap.

The current discussion of compensatory education moves beyond this stage. Sociologists, educators, and psychologists have been increasingly aware that an individual's socio-economic and cultural status is as directly related to his ability to learn as is speechlessness or retardation. Further, the argument states that the accident of birth into the lower income echelons must not be taken as an indication of a lack of ability. There is no absolute or perfect correlation between a child's economic status and his inherent intellectual potential.

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Therefore, there is a growing conviction, which today is taking on the dimensions of a movement and a philosophy in American education, that the class status of a child, particularly as defined by income, but with consideration of race, family structure, value systems, and cultural patterns, must not be permitted to mandate the class status of the adult into which he will develop. It is the responsibility of the school, along with the various social agencies of the community, to do that which is necessary to encourage and assist the child in improving his social position.

Idealogically, this is not a radical position for educators to take. The Americanization classes of the European migration period were an expression of this point of view. From an administrative standpoint, however, the position does have radical implications.

To compensate for the effects of environmental deprivation as presently analyzed, still in relatively crude fashion, costs a great deal of money. Without Federal aid to education, with state aid formulae which shortchange urban schools, with mushrooming costs of local governmental expenditures, the tax dollars available to Boards of Education in the larger cities are being squeezed more and more tightly. Competition for the allocation of funds available for education is growing more keen among community interest groups. The articulate and well-positioned middle class is determined to have the public schools serve efficiently the needs of their academically oriented, college bound children. With college standards going up along with population pressures, the urgency for effective preparation for higher education grows.

With these legitimate demands on the one hand, the educator seeking to install and expand compensatory programs for the masses of disadvantaged children is caught in a vise of conflicting claims. It will cost 25-50% more than average per pupil expenditures to raise the intellectual and social level of the slum child. With a limited treasury, this means that less will be spent for children in the advantaged neighborhoods.

Before such decisions can be made with confidence, it is necessary to establish a number of principles which educators and the public must come to accept:

(1) that poverty does inhibit children from learning in very specific ways and that being poor is not the same as being stupid;

(2) that it is possible to overcome the effects of environmental deprivation and release the potential of the slum child;

(3) that techniques for releasing this potential can be clearly defined, demonstrated and spread if money is available;

(4) that the middle class home provides education to the child in ways that directly supplement the school's work;

(5) that greater expenditures in the slum schools does not necessarily mean that the education of middle class children will suffer.

In 1960, the Ford Foundation was asked to help ten of the major American cities demonstrate the value of various techniques of compensatory education. The Great Cities School Improvement Program following upon the heels of New York City's exciting Demonstration Guidance Project and Higher Horizons program helped, we think, many educators and citizen leaders to realize the urgency of special programming in the slum schools. Secondly, it increased the stockpile of specific ideas for getting at the tough business of training the minds of disadvantaged children. Third, it is helping to fix in the minds of people the fact that the children have potential and that this potential can be developed. Fourth, the program has helped focus attention on the slum and its schools and in so doing has begun to encourage young teachers to regard work in these schools as a challenge rather than as a jail sentence.

While each of these programs, most of which will enter into their final year in September of 1963, are different, they are based on a common set of assumptions:

(1) Schools in "gray areas" can no longer be imitations of middle-class neighborhood schools, but must develop their own unique patterns of staffing, organization, curriculum content, and materials.

(2) An effort must be made to identify in-migrant families and orient them to school and community.

(3) New ways must be found to reduce the "culturally disadvantaged" of the "gray area" child and develop early competence in basic skills --- reading, writing, and arithmetic.

(4) Instead of being insulated from the surrounding community, the school must be organized and staffed to be a community center for parents as well as children and should work closely with other public and private community agencies to this end.

(5) In-service education for teachers should develop instructors who understand the disadvantaged child and the community. They should have the skill to devise and use special techniques and materials suitable for the disadvantaged child's education.

(6) The education of the parent often must go hand-in-hand with the training of his child in order to build up the confidence and competence of the adult as well as the child.

(7) Schools should seek ways to employ local residents, wherever possible, on a paid or voluntary basis and without particular regard to their formal education, to help schools become more sensitive to community

needs and to overcome parents' indifference or fear.

(8) Greater motivation and higher aspiration may be developed through exposure to legitimate models of success, academic and vocational guidance for parent and child, realistic training for future employment, and cultural enrichment activities (trips, concerts, etc.).

Special emphasis should be placed on preventing dropouts and acquainting youths with career opportunities.

(9) The programs would undergo continuous self-examination and evaluation.

Each project reflects all or part of these assumptions by the nature of its activities.

Buffalo

In kindergarten through grade six of one school, teachers are revising the curriculum for the culturally disadvantaged in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Improving reading skills is the focal point of their efforts.

A reading specialist, speech therapist, social worker, and art and music teachers have been added to the staff. These specialists concentrate on staff training as well as direct teaching. The project offers special classes in music, art, and creative writing for gifted students; and cultural enrichment activities such as trips, concerts, and lectures to broaden the horizons of all students.

Chicago

The Chicago project aims to prevent dropouts by providing remedial instruction, intensive academic and vocational guidance, practical job training, and cultural enrichment for over-age elementary-school students.

All students from one school district who are fourteen-years-old and still in elementary school have been assigned to classes of their own age group in four schools. Vocational counselors help them get part-time jobs to prevent their dropping out of school and to emphasize the importance of education in finding employment.

The project staff also conducted a census of out-of-school, unemployed youth and has begun an effort to recruit these youngsters

for vocational training and further education in English, mathematics, and other basic subjects. Thus the program is one of dropout retraining as well as dropout prevention.

New staff assigned to the project include vocational counselors, youth- and adult-activities counselors, a home economist, and social worker.

Cleveland

One junior high school has been designated as a summer "port of entry" to orient in-migrant children and their families to school and community before school opens. During the regular school year, the project continues to help in-migrant children and parents adjust to urban life and education through improved health services, achievement and psychological tests, expanded guidance, and new methods of informing parents of the city's employment opportunities and services. The project also involves the use of home visitors in six elementary schools and guidance counselors in three high schools.

Another feature of the project is an in-service training program in reading instruction for the teaching staff.

Detroit

The objectives of the Detroit project are reflected by personnel added to the staff of one senior-high, four elementary, and two junior-high schools. The new specialists are school-community agents, visiting teachers, and coaching teachers.

The school-community agent plans and supervises extensive after-school and evening educational, social, and recreational activities for students and parents and also encourages other community groups such as block councils to serve and use the schools. The visiting teacher is a social worker, dealing with the problems of emotionally disturbed children and providing liaison with the homes and social agencies. Coaching teachers conduct remedial classes in reading and mathematics and develop and introduce new methods and materials to the regular staff.

Project schools are also training centers for new teachers and some schools are experimenting with such curricular innovations as the nongraded primary and block-time programming.

A separate grant was made to assist the Detroit Board of Education in planning a new secondary school for a "gray area" community. Lay leaders, parents, and representatives of many public and private community agencies worked with an architect and school administrators to develop a plan for a new high school and adjoining family center. When built, the facility will provide many of the

social services necessary in such a community.

Milwaukee

Induction centers have been set up in project schools to prepare in-migrant children for entrance into regular school programs. Special teachers are assigned to help the children improve their basic skills; provide them with cultural enrichment; and help in their social adjustment.

Special staff are assigned to work with children, parents, and teachers. A social worker supervises the program in each school, providing the staff with data on cultural patterns and family backgrounds. Psychologists administer tests, counsel children and assist teachers in placing the children. Language specialists help provide educational programs for non-English-speaking children, and serve as liaison between parents whose mother tongue is not English, their children, and the schools.

Pittsburgh

Eight elementary schools and one junior-high are employing team-teaching with a master teacher, four staff teachers, student intern, and "team mother". The team-mother is a parent from the community aiding the teacher in routine housekeeping, clerical work and grading. Teams plan the week's lessons, schedule classes, and develop an improved curriculum. Since it allows flexibility in class size and, thus, more opportunities for work in small groups (even on a one-to-one tutorial basis occasionally), team teaching is particularly useful in remedial work and cultural-enrichment activities for slow learners.

Several community organizations provide personnel and funds for social services, trips, concerts and lectures for students, and an evening adult-education program.

A school-community relations specialist provides liaison with participating community agencies and civic groups.

Philadelphia

The two main features of the Philadelphia project are the use of neighborhood residents as school-community coordinators and and effort to improve the teaching of reading.

Reading specialists direct English teachers in work with under-achieving bright youngsters in the first, second, and intermediate grades. They also give small-group remedial instruction.

School-community coordinators inform parents of school programs and plans, make home visits in behalf of guidance and classroom teachers, and organize cultural enrichment activities.

Teacher aides assist substitutes and inexperienced teachers in routine classroom tasks.

San Francisco

The San Francisco project seeks to improve the reading and language skills of students in two elementary, one junior-high, and three senior-high schools in an area called the Western Addition. Reading specialists in each school are teaching students most retarded in reading in small groups, conducting in-service training programs and summer workshops in reading instruction for the regular teaching staffs, and preparing and evaluating texts and other new curriculum materials.

Counselors are concentrating on making contact with the home and providing vocational guidance to both students and parents. A project community-relations specialist has assisted in the creation of thirteen community study centers where students are tutored after school hours by interested adults, college students, and high-school students. Another project staff member is cooperating with the San Francisco Committee for Youth in placing students in jobs.

St. Louis

In an effort to reduce dropouts, St. Louis is experimenting with a work-related school program for approximately 300 students in seven of the city's senior-high schools.

A work coordinator and counselor have been assigned to each school. The work coordinator finds jobs for students, while the counselor gives intensive group and individual guidance, confers with teachers, and makes home visits.

Students work part-time, mornings or afternoons in local stores, factories, garages, and hospitals. Most students working mornings attend three classes each day, while the afternoon workers have a full schedule of classes.

In Philadelphia, talented Ida Kravitz is designing curriculum materials which focus on reading development by bringing together cultural experiences, expanded verbal expression, writing skills and vocabulary growth. Philadelphia stresses the inseparable nature of these activities and the process of learning to read, and the tendency of these skills to reinforce each other. Expanded supplies of reading materials, the use of literature for motivation, creative writing, greater use of audio-visual materials, and increased opportunities for public speaking are all part of the enriched reading program.

The two programs illustrate the need for: (1) beginning early with deprived children; (2) providing more diverse cultural experiences; (3) devoting far more time for the language skills; (4) using very specific, short units to focus the children's interest upon limited learning tasks.

The need for an early beginning in the language arts has clearly emerged from the Great Cities programs, but we have known this for a long time. What we have not understood so clearly is what the nature of an early program for deprived children should be. Outside of the Great Cities project, programs in Baltimore, New York City, Oakland, New Haven, Racine, Pennsylvania, and Chicago are now exploring what can be done in curriculum for three and four year old children with limited cultural experiences.

Already emerging as point of departure for new curriculum design is the need for more intensive work in concept formation. A survey of Great Cities' schools shows clearly the pattern of cumulative retardation which accelerates after the third grade. In other words, when the deprived child moves from the concrete learnings of the early grades into the content areas, his lack of broad conceptual knowledge and abstract reasoning ability cripple his progress. It would seem appropriate, therefore, for curriculum specialists in the content areas to begin sorting out the fundamental concepts which unlock the mysteries of social studies, literature, science and mathematics. All of these basic concepts are rooted in language and once they have been identified it should not prove too difficult to develop teacher techniques applicable for pre-schoolers, kindergarten and the early primary grades.

The principle of marrying skill development with concept centered activities will mean a general slowing of the pace of early skill development. In view of the deprived child's background, it would seem sensible that we avoid penalizing him for not learning at the rate of speed which has been judged suitable by a middle-class oriented school system.

The G. C. project has experimented with two techniques for finding the time to increase the emphasis upon language development and also to work slowly enough to insure learning.

In Detroit, the non-graded primary has been organized in at least one school so as to provide a teacher with a three year span in which to develop the basic skill and concepts. The non-graded primary is not new, but its relevance for the slum school has not been adequately explored. The results in Detroit, while far from conclusive, indicate that the larger continuous period-ensured by having the same teacher - is producing much more capable youngsters.

The team teaching approach of Pittsburgh finds more time for reading instruction by regrouping teachers and pupils according to instructional needs. Team teaching need not be detailed to this audience, but the Pittsburgh schools have discovered that they can give better individualized instruction, expand remedial and creative activities, and insure more consistent curriculum development through the team approach.

In view of the massiveness of the reading problem in the slum schools, we cannot realistically hope to solve the problem by recruiting well trained remedial teachers. While almost every Great Cities project uses remedial personnel, the emphasis in most is to use a reading consultant in a staff development role. In this way a teacher of teachers is provided for each school who can devote himself to the task of upgrading every classroom teacher's competence in the language art.

The Cleveland project exemplifies this approach at the junior high school level where the in-service program is attempting to get each teacher, regardless of subject specialization to utilize reading improvement techniques throughout the term. This is no easy task, given the desire of many secondary teachers to be regarded as subject specialists. The Cleveland project has produced a handbook to guide junior high school teachers in the development of reading skills.

This use of the "teacher of teachers" is a pattern developing in Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Buffalo. From each of these cities detailed information is available on curriculum units, materials - techniques.

Cultural enrichment programs, spurred by Higher Horizon's success, are included as a part of almost every Great Cities project. Two significant refinements or elaborations are developing. One is the growing emphasis upon enrichment through contact with individuals from the community who represent models of success. In Pittsburgh, for example, the Urban League is encouraging its members to work

with the schools, counseling - tutoring children in small groups. It is important here that people other than professional become involved. Successful civil service employees, skilled craftsmen are increasingly being recruited for the orientation of slum children to career possibilities.

Secondly, much more use is being made of cultural enrichment activities for concept formation purposes and vocabulary enrichment. One principal in the District of Columbia sees to it that parents precede their children on School trips. She finds that the shared experience of parent and child makes possible much more conversation at home, in the process bolstering the parent's ego and image. Trips randomly made aren't enough. Planning for the experience, especially in terms of language values is critical, as is follow up activity which attempts to reinforce the words and concepts stimulated by the experience.

* * * * *

In summary, we think the Great Cities program has helped to legitimize the sociological concept of compensatory education. We hope it has helped to give the slum school a high priority on our domestic list of unfinished business.

For the profession, we hope that useful clues in curricular planning, school organization, staffing, cultural enrichment activities will be provided to the school systems and teacher education institutions.

The one thing we know for sure is that no pat answers have emerged, no panaceas are being touted. The business all of us are engaged in is too complex for any complacency about the extent of our knowledge and skill.